

## HANFORD TANKS -- HELP STREAMLINE GOVERNMENT

*Decisions on how to safely manage, treat, store and dispose of Hanford's wastes will soon be made. Be a part of the process.*

### HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HANFORD'S WASTE TANK OPERATIONS:

The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) and the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) are beginning a process to define the best strategy for safely handling and disposing of Hanford's highly radioactive tank waste in the future, and need your input.

USDOE and Ecology are planning to prepare, concurrently, two Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) related to Hanford's high-level tank waste program. The first EIS is proposed as an interim action to construct and operate six new underground waste storage tanks. The second EIS covers the broad spectrum of tank facility operations, and will define how future tank waste activities are conducted.

### WHY IS AN EIS REQUIRED?:

The proposed TWRS program actions constitute major Federal and State actions, significantly affecting the environment and, accordingly, USDOE and Ecology have developed a strategy for providing the appropriate environmental review for the actions.

The agencies, in a cooperating role, are planning to prepare two environmental impact statements to address related TWRS activities. The agencies intend to work in concert to meet their respective requirements for an EIS. By cooperation, the two agencies can avoid duplicative processes and streamline the regulatory review requirements. Both agencies will maintain full independent authority and responsibility for the conclusions which the combined EIS may reach.

### WHAT IS THE TANK WASTE REMEDIATION SYSTEM?:

The Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) defines a complete way of dealing with tank waste management at Hanford. In the past, the operation and cleanup of the high-level tank wastes was handled by different organizations, under different requirements and specifications. In 1992, the USDOE and Westinghouse Hanford Company (WHC) reorganized to bring all the components together under one system, and integrate long-term disposal efforts with the day-to-day waste tank operations.

The TWRS program is being conducted in accordance with the *Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order* (Tri-Party Agreement). The scope of the TWRS program includes resolving tank safety issues, managing tank facility operations, upgrading tank infrastructure, characterizing and pretreating waste, storing wastes generated by cleanup activities, constructing new underground waste tanks, storing disposing of immobilized wastes.

### TANK WASTE REMEDIATION SYSTEM (TWRS) EIS:

The TWRS EIS will address the USDOE's proposal for the management, treatment, storage, and disposal of the waste currently stored in the existing 149 single-shell tanks and 28 double-shell tanks, and other wastes created during future cleanup activities at Hanford. The agencies recognize that removal of waste from the tanks may trigger Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) treatment and disposal requirements to complete closure of the tanks. Reviews will be conducted in the future when the impacts of tank closure can be meaningfully measured by the agencies.

USDOE and Ecology plan to complete the TWRS EIS by approximately October 1996.

### **MULTI-WASTE TANK FACILITY (NEW TANKS) INTERIM ACTION EIS:**

USDOE has identified the immediate need to create additional tank space to store highly radioactive waste. These tanks are needed to help resolve safety issues associated with "Watchlist" tanks. The new tanks are also needed to store waste generated by Hanford cleanup activities. The new tanks EIS is being conducted as an interim action while a comprehensive full-program EIS is conducted for the Tank Waste Remediation System.

USDOE and Ecology plan to complete the new tanks EIS by September 1994 to support a near-term TPA milestone.

### **WHAT IS NEPA?:**

The *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA) was signed into law on January 1, 1970. This law requires federal agencies to prepare detailed statements (i.e., environmental impact statements [EIS]) assessing the environmental impacts of, and alternatives to, proposed major federal actions that may significantly affect the environment. In addition, all federal agencies are required to develop methods and procedures to ensure that environmental considerations are factored into all decision-making processes.

### **WHAT IS SEPA?:**

The *Washington State Environmental Policy Act* (SEPA) provides a way to identify possible environmental impacts that may result from state agency decisions. The SEPA process helps agency decisionmakers and the public understand how a proposal will affect the environment. Ecology, as the lead state permitting agency for TWRS has determined that the proposal may have significant adverse environmental impacts and that a state environmental impact is required.

### **PUBLIC MEETINGS SCHEDULED:**

USDOE AND Ecology will host five public meetings to begin defining the scope of both the overall TWRS EIS and the new tanks interim EIS. Meetings are planned for Richland, Seattle, and Spokane, Washington, and for Hood River and Portland, Oregon. Meeting times are from 1 pm to 4:30 pm, and from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the following locations:

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|---------|---|
| Feb. 14 | Richland, WA<br>Hanford House--Red Lion<br>802 George Washington Way                  |
| Feb. 16 | Hood River, OR<br>The Hood River Inn/Best Western<br>1108 E. Marina Way               |
| Feb. 17 | Portland, OR<br>Bonneville Power Administration<br>Auditorium<br>911 N.E. 11th Avenue |
| Feb. 22 | Seattle, WA<br>The Mountaineer's<br>300 Third Avenue West                             |
| Feb. 24 | Spokane, WA<br>Spokane Convention Center<br>334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.                |

### **SIGN UP TO SPEAK:**

These scoping meetings will help set the framework to develop the tank Environmental Impact Statements. Public comment -- both oral and written -- will be accepted until March 15, 1994. You may sign up to speak at the meetings by calling 1-800-500-1660; you may also register to speak at the meeting. Send your written comments to:

Don Alexander	Geoff Tallent
USDOE	Wash. Dept. of Ecology
POB 550, MS R3-73	POB 47600
Richland, WA 99352	Lacey, WA 98504-7600
1-800-500-1660	1-800-321-2008

**EIS NOTICE OF INTENT DOCUMENT REVIEW:**

The Federal Register TWRS EIS Notice of Intent may be reviewed at the following Administrative Record and Hanford Tri-Party Agreement Public Information Repositories:

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD LOCATIONS:**

1. Washington State Department of Ecology  
Nuclear and Mixed Waste Library  
300 Desmond Drive  
Lacey, WA 98503  
(206) 407-7097  
ATTN: Marilyn Smith
2. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 6th Avenue, HW-070  
Seattle, WA 98101  
(206) 553-1388  
ATTN: Karen Prater
3. Westinghouse Hanford Company  
Environmental Data Management Center  
2440 Stevens Center Place, Room 1101  
Richland, WA 99352  
(509) 376-2530  
ATTN: Connie Wilson

**PUBLIC INFORMATION REPOSITORY LOCATIONS:**

1. University of Washington  
Suzzallo Library  
Government Publications Room  
Seattle, WA 98195  
(206) 543-4664  
(ATTN): Eleanor Chase
2. Gonzaga University  
Foley Center  
E. 502 Boone  
Spokane, WA 99258  
(509) 328-4220 EXT 3125  
ATTN: Lewis Miller
3. Portland State University  
Branford Price Millar Library  
Science and Engineering Floor  
SW Harrison and Park  
Portland, OR 97207  
ATTN: Michael Bowman
4. USDOE Public Reading Room  
Washington State University, Tri-Cities  
100 Sprout Road, Room 130  
Richland, WA 99352  
(509) 376-8583  
ATTN: Terri Traub

If you have special accommodation needs, please contact Michelle Davis at (206) 407-7126 (Voice) or (206) 407-7155, Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD).